

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 041630Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2431

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11218

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ECON, IT, EC

SUBJECT: ITALIAN POSITION ON ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE

1. IN A MEETING AUGUST 4 MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR, AMBASSADOR PLAJA, BROUGHT UP SUBJECT OF THE ITALIANS' UNHAPPINESS OVER BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE FOUR POWER MEETING IN HELSINKI ON BERLIN WHICH ALSO DISCUSSED ECONOMIC MATTERS. THE DEPARTMENT IS WELL AWARE OF THE ITALIAN ATTITUDE BUT PLAJA ADDED SOME INTERESTING DETAIL OF THE REACTIONS OF THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NINE. PLAJA BEGAN HIS COMMENTS BY EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR THE UNDERSTANDING SHOWN BY THE SECRETARY ON THIS ISSUE. HE SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE UK ARE SYMPATHETIC WHILE THE FRENCH, WITH THE GERMANS' ACQUIESCENCE, ARE ANTAGONISTIC TO ITALY'S DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE.

2. AT HELSINKI THE DUTCH WERE ALMOST VIOLENT IN THEIR ACCUSATIONS THAT THE ITALIANS HAD NOT DONE ENOUGH AS PRESIDENT OF THE NINE TO PROTEST AGAINST THIS EXCLUSIVE ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE FRENCH, BRITISH AND GERMANS. AS A RESULT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EC-9 POLITICAL DIRECTOS WAS HELD IN HELSINKI. THE GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE CAREFULLY STATED THAT NO REPEAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE ABOUT THE ESTABLISHING OF A DIRECTORATE TO CONSIDER ECONOMIC POLICY BUT ADMITTED THAT AN INFORMAL GROUP OF "SPECIAL ADVISORS" OF THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE US, UK, FRANCE AND GERMANY
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WOULD MEET. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT A JAPANESE "SPECIAL ADVISER" WILL JOIN IT. THE ITALIANS LEARNED, APPARENTLY FROM THE GERMANS,

THAT THE SPECIAL ADVISER FROM THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE FORMER
TREASURY SECRETARY SHULTZ. PLAJA COMMENTED THAT WHILE TECHNICALLY,
NO DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO ESTABLISH FORMALLY A FIVE POWER
BODY, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE SAME RESULT WILL BE ACHIEVED
BY THE INFORMAL GROUP, ACCORDING TO PLAJA, THE DUTCH, BELGIANS,
AND THE DANES ARE AS UNHAPPY ABOUT THIS DEVELOPMENT AS
THE ITALIANS. THE EC WILL TAKE UP THE ISSUE EITHER AT BRUSSELS
OR DURING THE FINANCE MINISTERS MEETING IN VENICE AUGUST 24.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EXPULSION, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, BERLIN QUADRIpartite MATTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: WorrelSW
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME11218
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750268-1181
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750885/aaaacwvf.tel
Line Count: 71
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <02 OCT 2003 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN POSITION ON ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE
TAGS: PFOR, ECON, IT, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006